

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 730
By Moore

A RESOLUTION to honor the valiant service of military working dogs and their handlers and to support the establishment of a national memorial for military working dogs and their handlers.

WHEREAS, the United States of America does not presently have a national memorial to honor the services and sacrifices of the tens of thousands of dogs our nation has sent to war since World War I; and

WHEREAS, such a national tribute is long overdue in recognizing America's loyal and heroic four-legged soldiers, marines, airmen, sailors, and coast guardsmen; and

WHEREAS, America's military working dog teams have a long and legendary history of courage, heroism, and sacrifice on thousands of named and unnamed foreign fields of battle in World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Panama, Kuwait, Somalia, Haiti, Kosovo, and Bosnia; and

WHEREAS, today, America's military working dogs are helping to fight the war on terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq by supporting our country's armed forces and the Department of Homeland Security; and

WHEREAS, most military working dogs were donated by American families; and

WHEREAS, military working dogs have been specifically trained for important jobs such as scout, sentry, tracker, mine and booby trap, tunnel, water patrol, coast guard, messenger, search and rescue, explosive detection, and patrol and drug detection; and

WHEREAS, military working dogs have been credited with saving the lives of countless thousands of Americans, foreign allied soldiers, and noncombatants, and their deployment has significantly reduced the enemy's ability to sabotage and destroy war equipment worth billions of dollars; and

WHEREAS, because of the effectiveness of these dogs, the enemy has often offered bounties on them and their handlers; and

WHEREAS, out of an estimated 4,000 dogs that served in Vietnam alone, only an estimated 190 were reassigned duty at other military installations outside Vietnam; 281 were officially listed as killed in action; an estimated 500 died in service; and the remainder were either transferred to the South Vietnamese Army or euthanized by order of the United States government because they were classified as equipment and, as such, deemed expendable; and

WHEREAS, the destruction and abandonment of those courageous animals was wrong and should never happen again, and their valiant service must not be forgotten; and

WHEREAS, soldiers across the nation, and specifically those soldiers in Tennessee, whose lives were saved because of the training, dedication, and courage of military working dog teams wish to recognize the courageous service of these four-legged American heroes and their place in history; and

WHEREAS, these remarkable animals have never before been honored for their bravery and service, and it is indeed appropriate that they be remembered at this time even as they continue to protect American lives today; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that this General Assembly, with great pride, hereby recognizes and honors the meritorious service of the military working dogs and handlers residing in Tennessee and the valiant service of military working dogs and handlers throughout American history.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that this General Assembly declares its unqualified support for the establishment of a national memorial to honor America's military working dogs and their handlers.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that enrolled copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Vietnam Dog Handler Association and the National War Dog Memorial Committee.